

floor so maybe I should bring that up also so everyone is clear on our intention. Is this bill earmarked for the teacher pay portion of the state budget? It is not. However, it is my understanding that there will be an amendment, the same amendment you had an opportunity to vote on yesterday on the main line budget bill, will in all probability be offered to LB 330 which will say in effect that if LB 98 passes then there will be an increased appropriation to the teacher pay bill. If LB 98 does not pass, then the safety net language I think is the Appropriations Committee language for that type of amendment, the appropriation will not be made. So there is in fact an indirect tie in here and I think for some of you that may cause you to be more likely to support it, realizing that some of you may be less likely to support it. Some of you may simply not care, but I think it's important that we bring that up. I do think, you know, Senator Robinson stands on the floor and points, waves his finger at us for spending lots and lots of money. Senator Warner I think has given the more accurate description of what has happened with state government and that is that we have two programs that are in essence entitlements, Medicaid and special education funding, that are growing at a much faster rate than our revenue base. And we have one of three choices I guess. We either get a handle on Medicaid and special ed, and we certainly have not shown an ability to do that, we need to continue to try to do that. Lacking our ability to do that, we either find additional revenues or we cut spending in existing state government programs. So I think we can probably afford to do some of each. But if we are going to raise additional revenues, I think we're much better off broadening the tax base of an existing tax than we are raising the rate. I find it interesting somebody commented that we have cigarette tax and we have alcohol tax with massive lobbying efforts against them that we seem to be winking at in passing those along. Whereas, we have this tax before us where there doesn't seem to be a lot of organized opposition to it but we can't find our way to add it to send it on further. I think it's a good, good solution. I think it's part of the mix. And I'd also continue to use the argument I used on General File. I think it's too early in the treatment of our overall budget to limit an option we have before us. I would urge you at the very least to send this on over to Final Reading until we see what the final analysis of the spending patterns are. So I would urge you to advance the bill and I would...I believe we've already had a...Senator Robinson asked for a machine vote so I would ask for a call of the house before we have that machine